

U. S. Employees Are Paid to Think

REGARDING John Cramer's column in which he advised that Civil Service Commission had doubled the size of the cash awards Government agencies can pay to those employees who submit economy suggestions:

A government employee is being paid by all of us to do his job to the best of his ability. The idea of rewarding him for coming up with an economy suggestion is a tacit admission that he has to be paid extra before he is going to do any thinking other than what he is compelled to do.

When President Kennedy recently said that we should not ask what our country can do for us but rather what can we do for it, he should have added "if the price is right" for the benefit of some of his dedicated civil servants.

Altho I am not a Civil Service employee and therefore technically not eligible for an award under this program, I have what I think is an excellent economy suggestion which I am offering gratuitously to the Civil Service Commission—do away with this ridiculous program and thereby save us poor taxpayers thousands (or is it millions?) of dollars annually.

J. P. C.

Award Program

In an effort to stimulate

more Federal employee economy suggestions, Civil Service Commission has almost doubled the size of the cash awards Government agencies can pay to those who submit the suggestions.

At the same time, it has suggested that the agencies take steps to screen out trivial suggestions, such as those calling for improved working conditions, which can be brought about by the employee himself or his supervisor.

The Commission also has urged the agencies to bid for better suggestions by:

1. Supplying employees with how-to-do-it guides to help them develop useful economy ideas.

2. Recognizing supervisors whose employees habitually submit worthwhile economy ideas. (Supervisor resistance is considered a weak link in the suggestion awards program).

3. Encouraging employees to look first to their own occupational fields for worthwhile suggestions

The former scale of awards would produce a \$300 prize for the employee who suggested a \$15,000 saving. The new scale will bring him \$625. The old scale would give him \$440 for a \$35,000 suggestion --as against \$825 under the new.

The new scale:

Savings of \$50 to \$300, a \$15 award; \$301 to \$10,000, an award of \$15 for the first \$300 in savings and \$5 for each additional \$100; \$10,001 to \$20,000, an award of \$500 for the first \$10,000 of savings and \$5 for each additional \$200; \$20,001 to \$100,000, an award of \$750 for the first \$20,000 in savings and \$5 for each additional \$1000; \$100,000 or more, an award of \$350 for the first \$100,000 and \$5 for each additional \$5000.

The new scale retains a \$5000 ceiling on awards which agencies can grant on their own, and \$25,000 on awards they can grant with prior Commission approval.